



The LongPath

A North Alabama DX Club Publication

Special points of interest:

- From the President
- March Program
- February Minutes
- Johnny Cash
- OK on 60m
- ARRL Band Plan Proposal

How to Join

- * Come to a club meeting;
- * or send in an application by mail (form on www.NADXC.org)
- * or call
Tom Duncan at
(256)705-2147

From the President

By Mark Brown, N4BCD

The groundhog was right. His shadow on February 2 portended another 6 weeks of winter and we've just endured a record show fall in North Alabama. The week prior had some of us north of the Tennessee border dealing with ice accretion on our antennas & feedlines from freezing rain. From what I've heard no club members suffered any damage but further into TN there's a lot of scrap aluminum tubing.

These cold temperatures have been a good excuse though to keep the hamshack warm & ready for exciting DXpeditions. K1N Navassa has come and gone. As of this writing, 3G0ZC Juan Fernandez, ZD8D Assention, and VK9LC Lord Howe are among several island activations.

Have you ever rotated a wire antenna to work DX? A few Saturday's ago I released the ropes holding my workhorse 132' ladder-line fed multiband doublet from the trees where it was favoring the northeast. Two crossbow shots later, that same antenna was facing Juan Fernandez. The effort was worth it. Now I need some warm temperatures and favorable winds to put the antenna back where it was.

With prodding from several NADXC members, I made my first and second DX QSO, *on CW*, with K1N a few weeks ago. Before that, my focus has been all Phone & RTTY but for a rarity like K1N it was time to bite the bullet. I recorded my call into the radio at 13 WPM and used a code reader to read my call because there's still no way I can recognize it at the speed the DX is replying. It's a start and I'm devoting at least a few minutes each night to either an online CW tool or radio listening to become more proficient.

This should warm your soul. Mark your calendar for the annual NADXC picnic on Saturday, September 12. We've moved up the date from prior years, gambling that a warm September day will beat a rainy October one. Thanks Chuck N4NM for securing the Monte Sano picnic pavilion. We'll print a reminder later in the year.

Special thanks go to Warren KJ4RAQ for his continuing efforts to line up interesting monthly meeting programs. If you have an idea for one, I'm sure he'll welcome your input.

73,

Mark N4BCD

Mobile & Portable Antennas and Mounts

By M.D. Smith, WA4DXP

The world of antennas might be characterized as a continuous battle of constraints. Performance vs cost vs size vs weight vs wind load... and, for portable operation, add mounting technique. M.D.'s presentation will go into this in some detail. Bring your questions.

We get to Ryans around 6:00 pm for dinner, 7:00 for the business meeting, and 7:30 for M.D.'s presentation. See you there!



February NADXC Meeting Minutes

By Bill Bathgate, KD8IGK, Secretary/Treasurer

Date: February 10, 2015

Meeting opened by Mark Brown, President. We had 29 in attendance with 4 additional guests.

DX Worked by club members etc.

Bob Di Pierre K8KI worked EP6T Iran on 20M and K1N 8 bands 3 modes.

Tom Duncan KG4CUY worked K1N on 8 Bands.

Steve Werner AG4W had 5 bands for EP6T and 8 Bands and 3 modes for K1N.

Chuck Lewis N4NM had 11 Bands and 3 modes for K1N

Chuck Dockery had 20M phone for K1N.

Bill Bathgate had 3 bands and 2 modes for K1N, also worked India VU3WIJ on 20M SSB.

Jerry Montgomery K4SAV got 8 Bands on K1N.

Lyle Bickley K4NA got 9 bands on K1N and HZ1 Saudi Arabia on 80M.

Mark Brown got 3 bands on EP6T and 9 bands on K1N.

Tim Wininger worked both EP6T and K1N.

Gary Agranat got China BD0AAI on 30M JT65 Mode and Antarctica DP1POL on 20M JT65.

Bruce Smith AC4G got 4 bands on EP6T and 9 bands on K1N plus Laos XW4ZW on 80M Longpath - **Attention everyone XW4ZW long path - that's a 16,205.5 mi contact!!**

Melanie Winter N4HIX for K1N in the log.

Johnny Winter KR4F got EP6T and K1N in the log also. Great teamwork Johnny and Melanie!

Kevin Hibbs KG4TEI got 8 bands for K1N.

Mick Bell N8AK for K1N in the log.

John Stensby N5DF got both EP6T and K1N in the log.

Kelly Johns W4VPZ got K1N on 15M SSB.

Regarding Johnny Cash

By Craig Behrens, NM4T

I came across the following about Johnny Cash in Wikipedia:

"Cash enlisted in the [United States Air Force](#) on July 7, 1950.^[24] After [basic training](#) at [Lackland Air Force Base](#) and technical training at [Brooks Air Force Base](#), both in [San Antonio, Texas](#), Cash was assigned to the 12th Radio Squadron Mobile of the [U.S. Air Force Security Service](#) at [Landsberg](#), Germany as a [Morse Code](#) Intercept Operator for [Soviet Army](#) transmissions.^[25] It was there he created his first band, named "The Landsberg Barbarians".^[26] He was the first radio operator to pick up the news of [Joseph Stalin's](#) death.^[27] He was honorably discharged as a Staff Sergeant on July 3, 1954, and returned to Texas.^[28] "

We Hams have some roots, some really neat heritage.

I heard Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire" album countless times when I was a little kid. He was my dad's favorite.

That song still resonates in my mind, bringing back fond memories of (much) simpler times.

73, Craig NM4T

Al Watson W4ABW got K1N in the log along with 7X - Algeria, S7-Seychelles, YB-Indonesia, A6-UAE, 9G-Ghana, HV-Vatican, A7-Qatar, A9-Bahrain, V5-Namibia, S01-Western Sahara, C5-The Gambia, EP-Iran (EP6T), FR-Reunion Island and 3B9-Rodriguez Island in the log. **Whew, that is a lot of DX!**

KS4L got 9 Bands CW, and 3 Bands SSB with only 100 Watts on K1N.

Jim Spikes N4KH got 1 Band RTTY 14 times.

OK on 60m

By Steve Conklin, AI4QR

For anyone needing the Czech Republic on 60m, Martin OK1RR will set up skeds on CW or phone.

I've shared beers with Martin in Prague, he's a hard-core DXer and CW op. He once help the record for the fastest CW op in EU (in WPM).

<http://www.ok1rr.com/index.php/13-news/96-i-am-available-for-skeds-on-60-metres>

Steve, AI4QR

The LongPath Staff

Publisher/Editor:

Tom Duncan, KG4CUY

Departments:

Chuck Lewis, N4NM, DX Contests

Bill Bathgate, KD8IGK, Minutes

Mark Brown, N4BCD, From the President

February NADXC Meeting Minutes

(cont'd from p. 2)

Announcements:

Bill Bathgate announced that we currently have 35 dues paying memberships with 7 of those as family memberships, in total we now have catapulted past last year's membership roles of 28 paid members to 42 in total. This is a 33% increase in paying members. We had budgeted \$465.00 in 2105 membership income and we now have \$590.00 in revenue, a 21% increase in income over last year (with two of those multiyear memberships). As an update at the time of this writing we have added more members with now 39 paid memberships with 7 of those family memberships for a total of 46 members.

Bill Bathgate KD8IGK our Secretary/Treasurer announced our current bank balance as of 10-Feb was \$3,959.47. New Business – It was moved that we make a donation of \$200.00 to the

VP8 South Sandwich Islands DXpedition. It moved by Johnny K4RF and seconded by Tim AB4B, all members present approved the motion.

Golden Corral - We continually seek out improvement of our dining options for meeting and the new Golden Corral just opened, but we informed during the meeting from Michael Werner K4BOG they have no separate dining space. Our Secretary Bill Bathgate KD8IGK personally visited the restaurant on Saturday 14-Feb and found that they do have a separate room with doors that close with a seating of 60-65 persons. However we have not arranged a change in meeting location yet. The Golden Corral was very crowded at this visit and we may have to wait a while for the traffic to slow down a bit and get a vote from the membership on possibly changing the location.

Kelly Johns W4VPZ will check with Ron Schaffer N4VM on possible maintenance on our repeater equipment quality.

Our February Program;

Tom Russell N4KG presented a program parasitic antenna radiation and it affects on signal strength and interesting methods to achieve this with dipoles and verticals. It was a very lively discussion and all members present learned a great deal on the subject.

Treasurer's Report

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Beginning Balance – | \$ 3,959.47 |
| Deposits..... | \$ 167.72 |
| VP8 Contribution..... | \$ (184.96) |
| Ending Balance - 2/3..... | <u>\$ 3,785.11</u> |

William Bathgate KD8IGK – NADXC
Treasurer and Secretary

ARRL HF Band Plan Proposal

By Tom Schwinn, W4NBS

ARRL Seeks Member Input on Draft HF Band Plan Proposals

(from the Feb. 26, 2015 ARRL Letter)

The ARRL is asking members to comment by April 19 on possible changes to the League's HF Band Plans suggested by the HF Band Planning Committee. The survey is part of the committee's efforts to tweak the band plans for the RTTY/data/CW portions of 80 through 10 meters – excepting 60 meters. The committee developed its suggested revisions to the voluntary band plans after reviewing some 400 member comments in response to a March 2014 solicitation that sought suggestions on how to use the spectrum more efficiently, so that data modes may coexist compatibly.

"The committee concluded that most of the concerns voiced by members could be addressed by modest adjustments to the existing band plans, and mainly by confining data modes with bandwidths greater than 500 Hz to the FCC-designated segments for automatically controlled digital stations (ACDS) and to parts of the RTTY/data subbands above those segments," ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, said. His article detailing the committee's suggestions will appear in the April issue of QST.

The proposed changes differentiate among ACDS, narrow RTTY/data modes having a bandwidth no greater than 500 Hz, and wider data modes having a bandwidth up to 2700 Hz.

Band-by-Band Draft Recommendations

On **80 meters**, the committee suggests several modifications to the band plan. FCC action in 2006 reduced the 80 meter RTTY/data subband to 100 kHz and limited access to the 3600-3700 kHz segment to Amateur Extra class licensees. "Unless and until the FCC Rules are modified, changes in the band plan for 3500-3600 kHz will not improve the situation," Sumner said.

The HF Band Planning Committee recommends that the League petition the FCC to move the boundary between the 80 meter RTTY/data band and the 75 meter phone/image band from 3600 to 3650 kHz and restoring that segment to General and Advanced class licensees. Members are being asked to comment on this proposal, as well as

ARRL Band Plan Proposal

(cont'd from p. 3)

on whether or not the ARRL should petition the FCC for these other changes:

- Shift the ACDS band segment from 3585-3600 to 3600-3615 kHz, consistent with the IARU Region 1 and 2 band plans.
- Extend the current Novice/Technician CW segment of 3525-3600 kHz to 3650 kHz.

Add 80 meter RTTY/data privileges for Novices and Technicians.

On **40 meters**, the committee concluded that it would be unrealistic to try to bring the ARRL band plan into alignment with the rest of the world, particularly with Regions 1 and 3 where operating patterns developed when the entire band, including phone, was just 100 kHz wide - and is still only 200 kHz. While 7040 kHz is a recognized RTTY/data DX frequency in the band plan, the best place for other RTTY/data activity in the US is above 7070 kHz.

The committee proposes aligning the band plan with the "Considerate Operator's Frequency Guide," with wide data modes -- outside of ACDS -- at 7115-7125 kHz. The "Guide" shows 7070-7125 kHz for RTTY/data, while the ARRL band plan shows 7080-7125 kHz. The FCC mandates that ACDS be confined to the 7100-7105 kHz segment.

On **30 meters**, the committee recommends confining wide data modes to 10.140-10.150 MHz, separated from other RTTY/data at 10.130-10.140 MHz.

On **20 meters**, the committee recommends using the 1 kHz IARU/NCDXF beacon network frequency (14.0995-14.1005 MHz) as a line in the sand between wide ACDS in the 14.1005-14.112 MHz segment, and narrow ACDS in the 14.095-14.0995 MHz segment.

The committee recommends 14.070-14.095 MHz for RTTY and narrowband data, noting that so-called "weak-signal" data modes often are used between 14.070 and 14.078 MHz.

On **17 meters**, the committee recommends confining wide data modes to the FCC-mandated ACDS segment of 18.105-18.110 MHz, separated from narrow RTTY/data at 18.100-18.105 MHz. FCC rules do not permit RTTY/data above 18.110 MHz, limiting options for this band.

On **15 meters**, the committee recommends that 21.070-21.090 MHz for narrow RTTY/data modes, the FCC-mandated ACDS segment of 21.090-21.100 MHz for both narrow and wide automatically controlled data station activity, and above 21.100 MHz for any additional wide data activity.

The ARRL Board also wants members to comment on the desirability of adding RTTY/data privileges for Novices and Technicians in their existing 15 meter segment, where they're now limited to CW.

On **12 meters**, the committee recommends confining wide data to the FCC-mandated ACDS segment, 24.925-24.930 MHz, separated from narrow RTTY/data operation at 24.920-24.925 MHz. FCC rules do not permit RTTY/data operation above 24.930 MHz, limiting options for this band.

On **10 meters**, the committee recommends that wide data be confined to the FCC-mandated ACDS segment, 28.120-28.189 MHz, separated from narrow RTTY/data modes at 28.070-28.120 MHz.

How to Comment

The League has set up a [web page](#) to record members' preferences and comments, which includes links to the HF Band Planning Committee [report](#) to the ARRL Board and to Sumner's April *QST* [article](#) (and **high-resolution band charts**). Those wishing to offer more detailed comments may [e-mail](#) ARRL. The comment deadline is April 19. The HF Band Planning Committee will deliver its final report at the ARRL Board of Directors' July meeting.

NADXC Officers and Directors

| | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| President | Mark Brown, N4BCD |
| Vice President | Warren Alford, KJ4RAQ |
| Secretary/ | Bill Bathgate, KD8IGK |
| Treasurer | |
| At-large | Kevin Hibbs, KG4TEI |
| directors | Tom Duncan, KG4CUY |